

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, May 2, 1904, with transcript

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL 1331 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D. C. May 2, 1904. My darling Mabel:

I am worried and distressed about Daisy, and yet do not know what to say without conveying the feeling of lack of sympathy with her aims and ideals. Now that is not so at all. I am proud of her, and sympathize with her feeling that she does not want to be a loafer simply — but wants to do something in this world. I sympathize with her leanings towards Art, and wish her to have all the advantages she may desire regarding studios and etc., and would like to help her in every way.

What I do not like about the matter is — that she should go off like this — with the object of living alone in New York among strangers with only her friend, Miss Hill, with her. I do not approve of this at all — for I do not have full confidence in her judgment of proprieties. She should be living with her mother or with friends.

It is only about two weeks since she spoke to me of her wish to buy an automobile, and when I suggested that the end of the season was not a suitable time to purchase and that it would be better to hire. She replied that there would be plenty of time for her to use it this season as she would be living with her grandmama at Twin Oaks for quite a long time. I had every reason to believe — not more than about two weeks ago — that she would be here at Twin Oaks 2 until the time came for her to go to Baddeck. And then only a few days ago I was told that she had been making arrangements to work in a studio in New York and proposed going at once. That was the first I had heard of this studio work — and the man into whose studio she has been seeking admittance without my knowledge — is a man I never heard of before — and of whose moral character I know nothing. Mr. Borglum

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may be the best man in the world but I never heard of him before, and cannot therefore form an intelligent judgment as to the propriety of the matter.

I am only sorry that Daisy did not ask me to communicate with Mr. Borglum, or go and see him, and make arrangements with him for her to enter his studio — instead of doing it herself. I love my little girl very dearly and would like to help her in any way I can — but I am not given a chance. Of course I am absorbed in my work, but it seems to me that in this whole matter Daisy has acted upon the tacit assumption that her father is not interested in her, or in her work, and that therefore there is no use in consulting me. I am only informed of arrangements after they have been practically decided upon.

I leave here Wednesday night — after the reception — for New York to call upon Mr. Borglum and satisfy myself concerning him — and see that the arrangements made with him are such as I can approve for my daughter.

Your loving husband, Alec.